THE GENESEE FARMER.

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N. GOODSELL, EDITOR.

NOTES ON MONROE COUNTY.

(Continued.)

Monroe County was set off from the Counties of Ontario and Genesee, by a law passed in February, 1820: and at that time, according to the census of the same year, contained 26,526 inhabitants, most of which were emigrants from New England. The increase of population since that time has been quite considerable; owing, in part, to the completion of the Grand Canal which passes through the centre of the county, and to extensive water privileges upon which manufacturing establishments have been built up. According to the census of 1830, the county now contains 49,862 inhabitants.

Villages.—The principal villages in this county are Rochester, Brockport, Pittsford, Penfield, Scottsville, Clarkson, and some others at the centers of the different townships, many of which exhibit marks of taste, industry and wealth; but a particular description of each might be considered foreign to the present purpose. Rochester Village is built on both banks of the Genesee river, 7 miles from the Lake, where the Grand Canal passes the river: it was commenced in 1812, and in 1815 contained 331 inhabitants, and at this time about 12,000.

Manufactures.—The most important manufactures in this county, as concerns Agriculture, are the flouring mills, no less than ten of which are in the Village of Rochester, or its immediate vicinity, and the quantity of flour manufactured annually, is about 300,000 bbls., and so great is the competition in this business that the Farmers can always obtain the New-York prices for their wheat, deducting the price of transportation.—There are also several saw mills in the Village, at which, different kinds of lumber are prepared for the eastern markets. There is, also, one cotton and one woollen manufacturing establishment, now in operation, and others building which are expected to be put in operation the season coming. There is in this Village one Furnace, where castings of all descriptions are made: the ploughs made here are considered of superior quality. In short, all implements of Agriculture are supplied on reasonable terms and short notice.

Roads and Canals.—The Erie Canal which passes through the centre of this county, is first in point of importance, and from which the roads may be considered as diverging in every direction. The aqueduct across the Genesee river, which is near the centre of the village of Rochester, must be considered as a stupendous work of art: it is 804 feet long, and supported upon eleven arches of stone, all founded upon solid rock, to which the bottom stones of the piers are tree nailed with large iron bolts. The cost of this aqueduct was $83,000.

From the east end of this aqueduct a Rail Road has been commenced, to extend to the head of the navigable waters of the Port of Genesee, which it is expected will be completed early in the summer coming. This, together with the improvements which are making at the mouth of the Genesee river, will greatly facilitate the Canadian trade, which is of much importance to this county.

The Ridge road, which passes through the northern part of this county, and extends almost the whole length of Lake Ontario, is one of those natural curiosities which attract the attention of travellers. It is an extensive ridge of sand thrown up by the force of water, and clearly proves that Lake Ontario once extended far beyond its present confines. The other roads of this county may be considered as equal to those of any other in the state, all things considered.

Antique remains—On the south shore of Lake Ontario are found many specimens of Pottery and other works of art, corresponding in workmanship and fashion with those found near that chain of ancient fortifications which extend from the Gulph of St. Lawrence to the Gulph of Mexico, concerning the date of which, the curious have, and undoubtedly will long speculate, before any satisfactory evidence will be obtained, as to the people by whom they were erected.—Near the southwest corner of the county, one of these fortifications is still visible, and its line of embankment may be traced near a quarter of a mile. In a piece of ground adjoining, the places of interment may be distinctly seen, and on opening the ground about two feet deep, the bones of those interred may be found, some of which are nearly entire.

That this section of country has once been inhabited by larger animals than are to be found on this continent at present, the following extract of a letter from J. A. Guernsey, to the editor of the American Journal, dated Pittsford, October 26th, 1830, fully proves:

"I have just procured a piece of a tusk, found three weeks since in the bank of the Ironduquoit creek, two and an half miles from this place. A boy struck a spade against the point of the tusk and broke it off: he then dug parallel to the surface of the earth about five feet below the sod, but he broke it into five pieces. The entire length of all the pieces was seven and an half feet, and the whole tusk must have measured nine feet.—The exposure to the air causing it to slack and crumble, I advised the possessor to lay it in a box of sand, where it now remains.

"The root or butt of the tusk is hollow for eighteen inches. The longest piece measures twenty-two inches in length and sixteen and a half inches in circumference, weighing twenty-two pounds. The weight of the whole was, when I first saw it, fifty-seven pounds and eight ounces. P. S. One of the vertebræ of the neck was also found, weighing two pounds two ounces: it was apparently very much decayed. The owner of the land intends digging for the remainder of the skeleton."

The above leaves not a doubt but that the Mastodon was once an inhabitant of the valley of the Genesee; but we believe the bones alluded to are the only ones which have been discovered in this county.

Springs.—As all the southern part of this county rests upon secondary lime stone, the general character of the water is *hard*, or containing so much lime in solution as to render it unfit for washing; nevertheless, there are many springs of clear cold water in most parts of the county, which answer well for drinking and culinary purposes. That part of the county north of the lime stone is supplied with springs of soft water, and the small brooks are also good for washing.

There are several mineral springs in the county; one four miles east of Rochester is thought to possess strong Medicinal qualities, and is already becoming a place of resort for invalids; for the accommodation of which, a spacious house has been built the past season. For all cutaneous complaints, the waters of this spring are allowed to be very efficacious.

Climate.—Owing to the immediate vicinity of the Lake, the climate of the County of Monroe may justly be called *temperate;* and the Meteorological Tables kept at Rochester the present winter will support this position. The most extreme cold of the present winter having been 6° below zero: at the same time south of the Allegany ridge, the mercury fell from 18° to 30° below zero. This county is not subject to early or late frosts, and but few counties in the State offer greater encouragements for the practice of Agriculture or Horticulture.

THE VINE.

As there appears to be a general excitement prevailing through our country at this time as to the introduction and cultivation of the vine, and also the manufacturing of wines, we propose to give such directions as may be useful to new beginners, and which, if followed, will enable such as are unacquainted with the raising of vines, to proceed, if not in the most perfect manner, yet, with sufficient skill to insure success.

We will not attempt to give a lengthy or particular history of the Vine or its early cultivation, accompanied with the art of wine making, believing, as we do, that all attempts to explain the origin of either must prove unavailing, as our knowledge of the commencement of Agriculture or Horticulture is very imperfect.

That the cultivation of the vine and the manufacture of wines have been considered of great importance by all civilized nations, both sacred and profane, historians fully attest; and the Mosaic writings give us to understand that wine in those days was considered as imparting joy and gladness to the hearts of men by its temperate use.

Heathen mythology goes far to convince us of the estimation in which the cultivation of the vine was held by the Egyptians. Apis or Osiris, the son of Jupiter and Niobe, was Deified, because he first taught them how to sow *corn* and plant *vines;* and after his death, they worshiped him in the form of an ox, emblematical of husbandry. Bacchus was also elevated to the rank of a god for having taught the manufacture of *wine* to his countrymen.

That the climate and soil of the northern part of the United States are favorable to the cultivation of the grape, we have no doubt, and the pro-

bability is, that had it not been for a most unfortunate prejudice in favor of foreign varieties, ere this, our markets would have been supplied with an abundance of pure and wholesome wines, instead of the intoxicating mixtures of alcohol, which are at present retailed.

As the season is now approaching for those who intend to cultivate the vine to begin their operations, we will commence with that part which is adapted to the season, viz: preparing seeds and cuttings.

There are three general methods of propagating vines, by *seeds* for new varieties, and by *cuttings* and *layers* for continuing known varieties.

From seeds. Those who intend raising plants from seeds which have been preserved dry through the winter, should put them into earth as soon as the season will permit of in open ground; but it is generally preferred to put them into a pot or box mixed with earth, which should be kept damp, and if, after the seeds have been soaked a few days, (if American) they are exposed to the frost, it is thought by many to facilitate their vegetation.—As soon as the ground will allow of it in the spring, a bed should be made for their reception, which should be well trenched and manured with old manure, and the seeds planted in rows about eighteen inches from each other, and covered about three fourths of an inch deep. The seeds may be dropped at one inch from each other in the row, and after vegetation, should be kept clear from weeds, and the vines may be allowed to fall upon the ground the first year; after which, they should be transplanted to some convenient place to allow them to show their quality, which cannot be judged of correctly short of four or five years. Where plants are raised from seeds there will be a part of them which will not produce fruit; but they should not be rejected as barren until they are four or five years old. Seedling plants should not be used to plant a vineyard before they have been proved, as not more than one half of them will prove fruitful, and grafting them is not as easily practiced as with many other kinds of fruit.

Cuttings. The most common method of propagating vines is by cuttings. These should be taken from the parent stocks before the sap begins to circulate in the spring. As to the length of cuttings there is a diversity of opinion, as well as to position of planting them, &c.; and as it appears that they succeed under the different modes of propagation, we do not consider it of vital importance whether the cuttings are longer or shorter. Some of the European writers say that cuttings should be three or four feet long, and two thirds of their length buried beneath the surface; others, that half that length answers equally as well, and experiments have been made which prove that good vines may be raised from one eye or bud with not over two inches of wood planted beneath the surface as Indian corn.—We have found cuttings of about one foot long to be as convenient and sure as any, varying either way according to the length of the joints of the vine, always wishing to have three joints or buds upon each cutting, which may be in most cases by varying the length of the cutting three or four inches. We prefer that the cutting should always be at least nine or ten inches, that the lower end may extend to that depth in the ground as not to be destroyed by the midsummer drouth. Should it be necessary to include more than three eyes or joints on the cutting, it does no injury. Supposing that the joints are of suitable length, we proceed as follows: First, select those of the last year's growth which appear most perfectly ripened, then make the first cut about one inch below the eye, so as to give room for the roots to spring, which they do in a ring just below the joint. In order to ascertain exactly the place from which they shoot, let the young operator take off the bark below the joint of one of them, and he will find a number of projections from the wood which will designate their location, as it is an elongation of those projections which form the first set of roots. The wood below this circle need not be left more than half an inch long, and about the same length above the upper one. At the time of planting the cuttings, the lower bud should be cut off with a knife, and only the two upper ones allowed to remain where there is more than three, so that if the upper one should be destroyed, there is one below in reserve, for in planting, only the upper one should be left above the surface; and in case that succeeds, the lower one, if it sprouts, should be cut away. As soon as the cions are cut, they should be buried or put in a box of sand and placed in the cellar or green house, and kept until the season arrives for planting them.

The variety of grapes selected are of the utmost importance to the cultivator. When the object of cultivation is entirely for the table, it may be well to have some of the finer kinds of European grapes, some of which are finer in flavor than our natives; yet it should be remembered, however, that these only continue to produce from three to five years in open ground before the mildew attacks them, after which they may be dug up; but the American varieties continue to increase in productiveness for fifty years or more, and some of them are but little inferior in flavor to European grapes; and we believe there are but few but what would prefer a bushel of fine American, to a quart of finer European grapes, although the latter would cost the cultivator as much as the former.

The American varieties recommended by Mr. Prince, (and no Horticulturist should be without his Manual of the Vine,) and others who have had the most experience, are the *Isabella*, *Alexander*, *Catawba* and *Red Bland*. Although this list may appear short, it includes the most valuable variety perhaps for a vineyard that can be found: in short, it includes all the most valuable ones cultivated in the northern states, as some of these are known under a great variety of names, the Red Bland alone having been cultivated under no less than twelve.

(To be continued.)

☞The Editor of the Hudson Gazette is informed that we have no recollection of ever having seen the Propectus of the Genesee Farmer in his paper. If we did see it, the neglect to place that paper upon our exchange list was inadvertent. Our intention has been to send the Farmer to such Editors, and to such only, as publish our advertisement; though we have continued the exchange with many who have not done it. The only inducement we have to exchange is to spread a knowledge of the character of the Farmer, as we can make little or no use of the great majority of our exchange papers.

In a part of this number the head of J. B's. communication was printed, "Gooseberries—*Relus glossularia*," it should have been *Ribes grossularia*.

LE RAY DE CHAUMONT.

This gentleman, who has received the appointment of President of the Agricultural Society of this state, recently formed, has resided in the county of Jefferson since 1799; and to him, in a great measure, it is said, is owing the unrivalled prosperity of that county. From a communication in the Albany Argus, we learn that he has devoted all his energies to the improvement of the country. To the opening of roads the construction of bridges, his time and fortune were devoted with a liberal hand. Operating upon a country of great natural capability, his labors were crowned with success, and he was soon surrounded by an active and intelligent population. In 1817, two years before legislative aid was extended to county agricultural societies, the efforts of Mr. Le Ray were successfully directed to the formation of the Jefferson county Agricultural society, which, under his superintending care, as its president, has sustained itself to this day, surviving the withdrawal of legislative aid seven years. The influence of this society upon the agriculture of the county is obvious to the most casual observer. It has excited emulation among farmers in regard to modes of tillage, in the construction of fences and out-buildings, and in the selection of stock; the finest animals of the finest breeds being universally sought for, and by bringing farmers into habitual intercourse with each other, it enables them to form a more just estimate of their value in the scale of society. Universally beloved and respected by the people among whom he resides, the selection of Mr. Le Ray as president of the state society, will be hailed with delight by the county of Jefferson, and will afford an assurance of the practical usefulness of that institution.

The father of this gentleman early embraced the cause of the American Revolution, and with his bosom friend La Fayette, was among those who at the French court gave the first impulse to public feeling, which led to the alliance of France with the United States in achieving our independence. His doors were open to all Americans; his house was the home of the American ministers, and his fortune was devoted to the cause of America, in the purchase of some of the earliest supplies of the munitions of war which came to our relief.

The early years of Mr. Le Ray were spent in the society of Franklin and Adams. In the year 1785, at the age of 25, he emigrated to the United States—in 1787 he became a naturalized citizen, and few have fulfilled the duties of citizenship with more fidelity.

A resolution has been offered in the New-York common council, to erect a monument to Washington, in the Park.

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE

AGRICULTURAL STATE CONVENTION

The New-York Farmer supplies us with the proceedings in detail, from which we select such parts as were not noticed in our last:

Wednesday, Feb. 15.—Mr. Livingston, from the Committee, reported a draft of a Constitution, which on being amended, was unanimously adopted, as follows:—

CONSTITUTION.

The Style of this association shall be, The New-York State Agricultural Society.—Its objects shall be, to improve the condition of Agriculture, Horticulture, and the Household Arts.

Section 1. The Society shall consist of such Citizens of the State as shall signify, in writing, their wish to become members, and shall pay, on subscribing, not less than one Dollar, and annually thereafter not less than two Dollars; and also of Honorary and Corresponding Members.—The Presidents of County Agricultural Societies, and of Horticultural Societies, or a delegate from each, shall, *ex officio*, be members of this Society.

The payment of Fifty Dollars or more shall constitute a member for life; and shall exempt the donor from annual contributions.

Section 2. The Officers of this Society, shall consist of a President, four Vice Presidents, a Recording Secretary, a Corresponding Secretary, a Treasurer, an Executive Committee to consist of the officers above named and three other members, of whom three shall constitute a quorum, and of a General Committee, the members of which shall be located in the several Counties, and equal to the Representation in the house of Assembly.

Section 3. The Recording Secretary shall keep the minutes of the Society; the Corresponding Secretary shall carry on a correspondence with other Societies, with individuals, and with the members of the Gen. Committee, in furtherance of the objects of the society. The Treasurer shall keep the funds of the Society, and disburse them, on the order of the President or a Vice President countersigned by the Recording Secretary; and shall make a report of the receipts and expenditures, at the annual meetings in February.

The Executive Committee shall take charge of, and distribute or preserve, all seeds, plants, books, models, &c. which may be transmitted to the Society; and shall also have the charge of all Communications designed or calculated for publication, and, so far as they may deem expedient, shall collate, arrange and publish the same, in such manner and form as they shall deem best calculated to promote the objects of the Society.

The General Committee are charged with the interests of the Society in the Counties in which they shall respectively reside, and will constitute a medium of communication between the Executive Committee, and the remote members of the Society.

Section 4. There shall be an Annual Meeting of the Society on the Thursday following the second Tuesday of February, at the Capitol in the City of Albany, at which time all the officers shall be elected, by a plurality of votes, and by ballot. Extra Meetings may be convoked by the Executive Committee; fifteen members shall be a quorum for the transaction of business.

Section 5. This Constitution may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the Members attending any annual meeting.

The following persons were appointed a

GENERAL COMMITTEE.

Albany—Henry W. Snyder, of Albany; Wm. Still, of Bethlehem, and Rufus Watson, of Rensselaerville. *Alleghany*—Philip Church, of Angelica. *Broome*—Virgil Whitney, P. M. of Binghampton. *Cayuga*—Joseph L. Richardson and Nath. Garrow, of Auburn, Elias Manchester and David Thomas, of Aurora. *Cattaraugus*, ———. *Chatauque*—James Mullet.—*Columbia*—John P. Beekman, of Kinderhook. Wm. B. Ludlow, of Claverack, and Wm. H. Wilson. of Clermont. *Clinton*—Josiah Fisk, of Keesville. *Cortland*—Saml G. Hathaway, of Solon, and Jesse Ives, of Homer. *Chenango*—Thompson Mead, of Norwich, Uri Tracy, of Oxford, and John Latham, of Guilford. *Delaware*—Jabez Bostwick, of Hampden, and Martin Keeler, of Delhi. *Dutchess*—David Hosack, of Hyde Park, Wm. Davies, of Poughkeepsie, Jas. Grant, of ———, and Isaac R. Adriance, of Fishkill. *Erie*—Peter B. Porter, of Black Rock.—*Essex*—Henry H. Ross, of Essex *Franklin*—Luther Bradish, of Moira. *Genesee*—M. O. Coe, Shubal Dunham, and Horace Healy.—*Greene*—Anthony J. Van Bergen and Appollos Cook. *Herkimer*—Wm. C. Crane, F. P. Bellinger, of Herkimer, and Daniel C. Henderson. *Jefferson*—Vincent Le Ray, of Le Raysville, Edmund Kirby, of Brownville, Egbert Ten Eyck, of Watertown. *Kings*—Joseph Conselyea. *Lewis*—Isaac W. Bostwick, of Lowville. *Livingston*—James S. Wadsworth, of Geneseo, and C. H. Carrol, of Groveland. *Madison*—Mathew Pratt, of Eaton, Joseph Bruce, and Sylvester Beecher, of Lenox. *Monroe*—Isaac Moore, of Brighton, Wm. Garbut, of Wheatland, and Jas. Sperry, of Henrietta *Montgomery*—Stephen Reynolds, of Minaville, Archibald McIntyre, of Johnstown, and Samuel Jackson, of Amsterdam. *New-York*—Charles Henry Hall, Anthony Dey, Wm. Wilson, Jacobus Dyckman, Thomas Hogg, Abraham Bell, Charles Oakly, Gideon Lee, Alpheus Sherman, Wm. Shaw, and James B. Murray. *Niagara*—Benj. Barton. *Oneida*—Geo. Brayton, of Western, Eli Savage, of New Hartford, Gardiner Avery, of Paris, Israel Stoddard, of Canaan, and Ephraim Perkins, of Trenton. *Onondaga*—David Munro, John C. Brown, James Geddes, and Dan Bradley, of Marcellus. *Ontario*—Robert C. Nicholas, of Geneva, Thaddeus Chapin of Canandaigua, and Moses Fairchild, of East Bloomfield. *Orange*—George D. Wickham, of Goshen, Jacob T. Walden, of Walden, and Samuel S. Steward, of Florida. *Orleans*, ———. *Oswego*—Wm. M. Cheever, of Oswego. *Otsego*—A Roseboom, of Cherry Valley, Arunah Metcalf, of Cooperstown, Pascal Franchot, of Butternuts, and Israel Hayes, P. M. of Unadilla. *Putnam*, ———. *Queens*—J. A. King, of Jamaica. *Rensselaer*—Richard P. Hart, of Troy, Alex. Walsh, of Lansinburgh, A. Knickerbacker, and Henry D. Grove, of Hoosack. *Richmond*—Richard Crockeron. *Rockland*—Cor. J. Blauvelt. *St. Lawrence*—Wm. Bacon, of Ogdensburgh, and Theodorus O. Fowler, of Fowler. *Saratoga*—Earl Stimson, of Galway, Philip Schuyler, of Schuylerville, John H. Steele of Saratoga Springs. *Schenectady*—Wm. A. S. North, of Duanesburgh. *Schoharie*—Wm. C. Bouck, Wm. Deitz. *Seneca*—Tompkins Delevan, of Ovid, and Erastus Woodworth, of Ovid. *Steuben*—Andrew B. Dickinson, P. M. of Hornby, Wm. Kiernan, of Wayne Hotel, P O. *Suffolk*—Selah B. Strong, of Drown Meadow, and Nichol Floyd, of Moriches. *Sullivan*—Wm. Gillespie. *Tioga*—David Williams, of Berkshire, and Caleb Barker, of Elmira. *Tompkins* Nicoll Halsey, of Halseyville, Charles H. Morrell of Lansing, and Benj. Jennings, of Danby. *Ulster*—Levi Hasbrouck, J. Hardenburgh, of New Paltz. *Warren*—A. McDonald, of Glennsfalls. *Washington*—John McDonald, Isaac Bishop, Thomas N. Clark, of Argile.—*Wayne*, ———. *West Chester*—Wm. Jay, Peter V. B. Livingston, Philemon Halsted, of West Farms. *Yates*—R. H. Williams, P. M. of Middlesex.

On motion of Mr. Buel, of Albany, *Resolved*, That the Executive Committee be authorised to fill existing vacancies in the General Committee; and also such vacancies as may hereafter accrue by death, removal, or refusal to act.

On motion of Mr. P. S. Smith, of Oswego, it was *Resolved*, That, the Ex. Committee prepare and publish an article, stimulating the farmers of this state to plant Mulberry Trees, with a view to the culture of silk; the Society considering it an object of the first importance. That the Ex. Committee procure and distribute, as extensively as may be in their power, seeds of the white mulberry, with instructions for sowing them, and for planting and raising the trees.—And, that the thanks of this Society be presented to the Hon. A. Spencer, for the information given by him on the silk culture, and that he be requested to communicate the same to the Ex. Committee for publication.

On motion of Mr. Buel, it was *Resolved*, That H. W. Delavan, J. Buel, H. Hickock, A. Eaton, and W. A. S. North, be a committee to draw a plan for Agricultural Schools, to embrace experimental and practical farming; together with an estimate of the expense necessary to establish and put the same in operation; and to report at the next annual meeting of the Society, with their views of the utility of such establishments.—*Resolved*, That V. Le Ray, E. Savage, C. H. Hall, P. S. Smith, G. Clark, and J. Buel, be a committee to report at the next meeting of the Society, on the practicability and utility of establishing annual Fairs, for the purchase and sale of live stock, seeds, and other products of husbandry, and of household labor.

On motion of Mr. Schuyler, of Saratoga, *Resolved*, that 1,000 copies of the proceedings of the Convention and Society, be published by the Ex. Committee.

On motion of P. S. Smith, of Oswego, *Resolved*, That this Society earnestly recommend to the consideration of the respective counties of the state, the organization, at their earliest convenience, of County Societies, for the promotion of Agriculture, Horticulture, and the Household Arts; and at the primary assemblies of the friends of Agriculture, convened for the purpose of such organization, the expediency of petitioning the Legislature to pass a Law appropriating a portion of the funds of the State for the advancement of the above objects, be discussed, and the sentiments made public through the medium of the press.

On motion of H. G. Spafford, of Rensselaer, *Resolved*, That the friends of improvement in Agriculture and Horticulture, assembled in this Society, view with approbation the efforts of the conductors of the "NEW-YORK FARMER," and the "GENESEE FARMER," whose example is exerting a salutary influence on the public mind.

On motion of Mr. Waldron, of Orange, *Resolved*, That the Ex. Committee take into consideration the expediency of establishing a weekly paper, under the patronage and direction of this Society.

More than two hundred entered their names as representatives from upwards of thirty counties. The Society adjourned, after an interesting session.

COMMUNICATIONS.

FOR THE GENESEE FARMER.

GOOSEBERRIES—*Ribes glossularia.*

The volume of *Entertaining Knowledge* which treats of the gooseberry, contains some criterea, with regard to the quality of this and other fruit, which may be new and interesting to some of your readers. The color of the skin indicates the quality of the flesh. That as acids change the vegetable blues to red, the red berried are generally the most sour. When the green is deep and pure, sweetness seems to be the leading characteristic, as in the Gascoigne gooseberry, green gage plum and green sugar pear. The amber color is accompanied by the richest vinous flavor, while the white tends to insipidity. The yellows, therefore, excel in flavor. Large gooseberries in general, and large green ones in particular, are thick in the husk, and contain less pulp, than those of a smaller size; while the flavor, in general, is rich in proportion to the thinness of the husk.—Some of the large green, especially those that are smooth and gourd shaped, and of a brownish tint, are almost tasteless, and even disagreeable. The finest, even in Scotland, where they excel in flavor greatly those grown in England, are those of medium size. In the gooseberry, as in other fruits, we are too apt to sacrifice excellence for magnitude—to prefer the great to the good.

Albany. J. B.

FOR THE GENESEE FARMER.

USE OF PLASTER ON CORN.

Milton, February 14, 1832.

Mr. N. Goodsell—Through the medium of the Genesee Farmer, I wish to communicate a fact to the farming community, from which some may, perhaps, profit. It came under my observation last summer, and is simply this. I planted with Indian corn a field which contained about five acres. The seed was all wet with soft soap and rolled in plaster, except a few rows through the middle of the field, which was planted dry. Both kinds were treated alike, and occupied the same kind of soil, (sandy loam) and the whole field had a gentle declination to the sun. The difference between the two kinds was very great.—That which was prepared with soap and plaster was a fair crop; that which was planted dry did not yield at the rate of three bushels to the acre—stalks in proportion. I am convinced that plaster would have no enemies if every one would give it a fair trial.

I am a practical farmer; and intend, occasionally, to let you hear from me. W. P. W.

I would add by way of P. S., that there is in this neighborhood a good deal of excitement on the subject of raising silk.

FOR THE GENESEE FARMER.

HARROWING MEADOWS.

We not unfrequently hear farmers complaining that their meadows are sward bound. In the spring of 1830, I had a piece of meadow in this condition. Not wishing to plough it up that season, by way of experiment, I harrowed it faithfully, which produced the desired effect. My crop of hay was much larger than the preceding season, owing, I have no doubt, to the application of the harrow. S. B.

FOR THE GENESEE FARMER.

WINTER BIRDS—NO. 4.

The *black capt titmouse* appears to be a settled inhabitant of the Genesee Country. In summer he is less noticed;* but in winter he attracts much attention by his activity and sprightliness. Even when the weather is severe, he rarely, if ever, except during storms, waits in hopes of a better day for discharging his duties; but carefully examines the branches of our fruit trees, without any choice of position. With his head downwards as well as erect, he removes the scaly bark where some insect had fixed his winter abode; and I have been gratified to observe on his near approaches to the window, that his labors were rewarded by prompt payment. The weather boards of buildings often furnish shelter to insects in the *pupa* state, and this bird is greatly our benefactor by removing such nuisances. It is true, he works on his own account, but it is among the best interests of our farmers to preserve and protect him by every means in their power.

This bird is popularly known by the name of *chick-e-dee'-de*, given in imitation of his social notes. His song is heard in our woods on the near approach of spring, often several weeks before our migratory songsters arrive.

We have sometimes observed him in company with *the nut-hatch* and *the small downy wood-pecker*. Wilson says indeed that he and his mates are "attended by two species of Nut-hatch, the crested titmouse, and Brown Creeper" as well as by the small spotted wood-pecker, "the whole forming a very nimble and restless company whose food, manners, and dispositions are pretty much alike."

"This species has a very extensive range; it has been found on the western coast of America, as far north as lat. 62°; it is common at Hudson's Bay, *and most plentiful there during the winter*, as it then approaches the settlements in quest of food. Protected by a remarkably thick covering of long, soft, downy plumage, it braves the severest cold of those northern regions.

"They abound among evergreens feeding on the seeds of the pine tree; they are also fond of sun-flower seeds." It ought to be remarked, however, that they are not confined to evergreens.

2 mo. 13, 1832. D. T.

FOR THE GENESEE FARMER.

PLOUGHING CORN GROUND IN THE FALL.

Much has been said upon this subject, and I will not attempt to theorize or give my opinion on either side, believing that much depends on the nature of the soil and other circumstances; but will simply relate my little experience. Having a piece of sward land which I intended for corn, I ploughed a strip around the field about three rods wide in the fall; in the spring following, I ploughed the remainder and planted the whole to corn.

That which was ploughed in the fall was tilled with much less labor, and produced a much greater crop. The soil was gravelly, or what the Country Farmer denotes fourth quality. S. B.

*Wilson says, "During the fall and winter they leave the depth of the woods and approach near to the scenes of cultivation."

FOR THE GENESEE FARMER.

TO DESTROY RATS.

Middlesex, Feb. 13, 1832.

Mr. Goodsell—In your paper of Jan. 28, your correspondent, Ulmus, complains bitterly of the depredations and trespasses of the rats upon his property. He is welcome to my experience on the subject, without the reward or inducement of a patent right held out by him. About the year 1803, I removed on to a farm near Savannah, in the state of Georgia, where I was very much annoyed by rats, which, in that climate, harbor in the woods in immense numbers, and are drawn in swarms about every out building where they are likely to get food. I tried arsenic in all the forms mentioned by Ulmus, and many others; but all was without any known effect.—At last, I procured a quart of opened oysters, to which I added about an ounce of arsenic, stewed them well together, then divided them two or three oysters in each separate shell, and placed them under and about the out-house: the oysters all disappeared in about fifteen or twenty minutes. In the course of two or three days after this I observed several rats very much swelled, and their hair rough and staring: but I have no recollection of seeing a single dead rat, nor were they materially thinned about the out-house; from which I conclude that arsenic, although it may sicken, will not destroy *rats*. The ensuing spring I was troubled with immense flocks of a bird called the Corbeau, in size between our large corn black bird and the crow; these, with the field rats and the squirrels, threatened to destroy totally my corn field and garden. I procured two ounces of Nux Vomica which I bruised or pounded in an iron mortar, and then added two or three quarts of hot water, let it stand to soak all night. In the morning I took about a peck of corn, and poured the water from the Nux Vomica on to it, and left it to soak till near sundown. Towards evening I scattered the corn all around the fences, and crossed the fields from corner to corner, scattering a little of the corn as I went.—After which, I had no further trouble from the birds, no one of them venturing to alight after that day on the field. I found a number of dead rats and squirrels near the fences. Such is the result of my experience, and if it will be of any service to Ulmus, or any other of your readers, I shall feel myself sufficiently paid for any trouble in communicating the same.

I remain, yours, R. M. WILLIAMS

FOR THE GENESEE FARMER.

BROWSING CATTLE.

In the early settlement of this country, cattle suffered much for the want of hay. I noted in my travels at that day, that the cattle of the New Englanders looked the best. I called at a Farmer's log house, one day, and asked him, what made his cattle look so well? when those of some of his neighbors were pinched up and shivering about the door. "Why," said he, "I divide my hay between January and March, because I have but little more than enough for those two months: but, I raised some pumpkins and corn; and topped my corn, and saved that part green and bright for cows; I cut up my corn butts and husked my corn in the barn; I threw these into a heap and let them lie about a week, and when they had got tender by the *heat*, I pitched them on a scaf

old over my cow stable, and salted them, (as well as my hay) and occasionally pitched a fork full of bush hay among them. During December, I was cutting down timber, my cattle browsed nearly all day, at night I gave the young cattle a few corn butts and an ear of corn each; to my cows I gave each a quart of meal, with some house feed, pumpkins, &c.; my oxen had some hay and some corn; and in the morning they went to the woods again. When the snow became deep, I felled bass, maple and hickory, with the tops near a beaten path, and my cattle, from eating a little *salt hay* and *salt butts*, and *slops* and *messes* at the door, would devour the tender parts of the tree tops, to the size of my finger. I have only one horse which used up my straw, which was cut by my boys with my hand ax. This is the way I do; and with scarcely more than half fodder enough, I bring my herds through the winter without loss."

I called on a neighbor of the above, whose roof was decorated with some of his cattle's hides; and asked him, what ailed his cattle to look so lank? "I hav'nt fodder," was the reply. "My hay was exhausted by the first of February"—"but where was your corn-fodder?" "Why, that an't good for any thing—I husked my corn in the field and turned in my cattle." "Where was your browse?" "O Lord," says he, "when my hay was gone, I did browse them until they about half died ———."

Now, Mr. Goodsell, I leave you to make the comment, if any is needed. *S.

FOR THE GENESEE FARMER.

HARROWS.

Cayuga County, Feb'y 9th, 1832.

To the Editor of the Genesee Farmer:

Having seen an article in your paper respecting *Harrows*, that those in general use are not good, I have thought it would not be amiss to communicate through your paper to my brother farmers, my views on the subject of perfectly pulverizing the soil, without which, much of the vegetable nutriment will lie dormant, or what is worse, the surface of fields will be rendered uneven by sods which have not been torn to pieces, the grass roots of which will revive and extend themselves in every direction, thereby preventing the growth of the desired plants in their immediate vicinity.

For summer fallows, where the surface and soil will allow of it, let it be ploughed deep and rolled with a roller filled with short teeth, which will serve to pulverize the soil, and at the same time allow all the sods to remain at the bottom of the furrows, where they will be rotting and preparing to give out the greatest quantity of vegetable nourishment to the succeeding crop.

At seeding time let the seed be sown upon the surface, and harrowed in with a double hinge harrow, which, if properly made, will not allow the weeds and other light substances to collect upon the teeth, as is the case with the common single harrow, and which are disengaged in parcels causing an inequality in the surface, and collecting those which ought to be buried beneath for the nourishment of the crop.

The importance of leaving the surface of lands smooth, especially where they are intended for grass, is admitted by every good farmer; as uneven surfaces are hindrances to all future operations, to say nothing of the observations of travellers and better husbandmen, when they see fields tilled in a slovenly manner.

I am not prepared to say, whether the imperfections of our common harrows are owing to the want of workmanship on the part of mechanics, or the want of encouragement from our farmers, which might induce mechanics to furnish better instruments; but certain it is, were farmers to study their own interest, they would procure the most perfect instruments of the kind, although at an advanced price, as the difference of a few shillings in the first cost would bear no comparison with the effect upon the crop.

I am, dear sir, yours, &c. T. H.

NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

The above communication was accompanied with a description of a double, or rather, treble hinge harrow, composed of three parts, each part having two main pieces six feet long, and three inches square, each piece to contain five teeth made from one inch iron rods, to be nine inches long, the whole to be drawn by one corner; but owing to an omission in the description of its shape, it is not inserted, but will be, at any time, should the writer give us such a description as to enable mechanics to build from it.

WEBSTER'S DICTIONARY.

FOR THE GENESEE FARMER.

To the Editor of the Genesee Farmer:

Sir—I have lately read in your paper, No. 51, 52, some remarks on my dictionaries, which induce me to offer a few brief explanations of some things which seem not to be understood, or to be misrepresented. I have hitherto forborne to notice newspaper paragraphs respecting my dictionaries, suffering the defense of them to rest on their own merits. *Candid* and *well informed* men require no other means of defense; but candid men may mistake and form erroneous opinions from want of information. I have admitted that my dictionary is not a *perfect* work; and from the difficulties which attend the execution, I can assure you and the public, that if the work had been performed by twenty or forty men, selected from the highest literary characters in Great Britain and America, it would not have been so perfect as to reconcile *all opinions on every point*. An entire unanimity of opinion in regard to the merits of a dictionary of this sort, is out of the question. You would be amused, sir, if you could see the letters I have received from men of perhaps equal talents and judgment, expressing *directly opposite* opinions on the same points.

The first difficulty I have to encounter proceeds from the very limited acquaintance of literary men with the origin of our language, the changes it has undergone, and the derivation of words, or the affinities between our language and others. So imperfect is philological knowledge, that, after repeated applications, no person, either in the United States or in Great Britain, has been found, who has thought himself competent to review one of the most interesting parts of my quarto.

There are two classes of men who occasionally cavil at particular things in my dictionary. One consists of persons interested in books which come in competition with my smaller books, and which are constructed on the plan of the larger works. The efforts of these men are directed to prejudice the public against my books, for the purpose of keeping their own books in use. They caricature my works, by exhibiting what they *suppose* to be *wrong*, and suppressing what they cannot deny to be *right*.

The other class consists of candid, disinterested men, who seek for truth, and are disposed to receive it; but not having the means of obtaining a knowledge of the reasons and principles on which my decisions have been founded, they entertain doubts or raise objections which those reasons might obviate. Most of my fellow-citizens are probably of the latter class; and as my quarto dictionary is and will be in few hands, those who have not the opportunity of reading the introduction to that work, where my principles are detailed, are entitled to receive explanations by other means. I would, however, suggest, that for extending a knowledge of the subjects, it might be useful to furnish *reading rooms* with a copy of the quarto.

In attempting to reform the disorders of our language, a serious obstacle presents itself in the respect, and perhaps I may add, the obsequious reverence which the people of this country have been accustomed to entertain for British authorities. I began life with that respect; my first books were compiled under its influence; nor was I disabused of this influence, till I had arrived to the middle age of life. I therefore followed those authorities without undertaking to *correct* them, or to examine their correctness. My later investigations have led me to go far beyond those authorities, and it was soon discovered that the field of philology has never been fully explored, and that the English books on which we have relied as standard works, are all very superficial. The English dictionaries are found to be inaccurate or defective in etymologies, and in definitions; their vocabularies are very deficient in the number of words they contain; in pronunciation they differ in a thousand words; and the discrepancies in orthography are numerous, almost beyond credibility.

To qualify myself to develop the origin of English words, their radical sense, their changes, and their affinities with words in other languages, I devoted *ten years* exclusively to this subject. The results of my labors form a manuscript which would make a quarto volume. This is not published; but it is the basis of the etymologies in my quarto dictionary.

In settling the orthography of words, my course has been not to disturb the orthography, however anomalous, when practice has been uniform from time immemorial; with the following exceptions in a very few instances: 1st. When the origin of a word has been mistaken and the common orthography is obviously wrong, and adapted, in some cases, to mislead the inquirer in regard to its true signification. 2d. When words are written differently, although from one source, or belonging to the same analogy. In the former case, I have disclosed the true origin and proper spelling; and in the latter, I have reduced all the words to uniform orthography. These cases comprehend the principal classes of words which I have attempted to correct.

Another rule I have adopted is that when words are written differently, I settle the question of propriety, by the etymology or true original orthography. In this case, I sometimes of necessity give a preference to popular practice, rather than to the practice of the learned, as found in books. For example, I prefer *drouth* and *highth*, (or hight) to *drought* and *height*, because the former are the original words, and almost universally used by the great mass of our population. When the popular pronunciation is *right*, and that of the learned *wrong*, I would conform to the popular practice. I reject entirely that fastidious contempt for popular usage, which is manifested in English writers. Lord Bacon wrote *drouth*, and Milton and others wrote *heighth*: although it is better to make *highth* a regular derivative of *high*. So I write *mold*, for this is the original word, as written by Milton, Dreyden, Pope, and many others. It is of Saxon and not of French origin. I write *lanch*, for it is from *lance* or the same origin. I write *embassador*, for it is convenient that it stand in the vocabulary with *embassy*; and it is thus written by many authors. I write *pinchers*, for this common pronunciation is not a mistake—it is and it ought to be a regular derivative of *pinch*. *Pincers* is found in books, but it has no legitimate origin in our language. I write *tun*, *tunnage*, for *tun* is not from the French, but from *tun*, a cask; the weight being taken from the cask. I write *melasses* for this is the true spelling from the French or Italian. So it is written by Edwards in his history of the West Indies. *Molasses* is a blunder. I write *ribin*, from the Welsh; it is not the French *ruban*, and as to *ribbon*, it has no legitimate origin. I write *furlow*, for *furlough* is nonsense. The two parts of this word which we have received from the Danes or Dutch, are the same words which in our language, are *fur*, *far* from *fare* to go, and *leave—leave to go*. This is the sense of the word. I write *redout*, from the French *redoute*. Who committed the blunder by inserting the letter *b*, I do not know, but it is a blunder of which the author might well be ashamed.

I write *controller*, from the French *contre* and *roll*, one who keeps a *counter roll*, check or register. *Comptroller*, from *compter*, *computo*, signifies a *counter* or *computer* of the rolls, which is nonsense. Baily did not insert the latter in his dictionary; he knew better; he knew that there is no such legitimate word in the language, as *comptroller*. Such blunders as these shall not disfigure my vocabulary, without correction.

We write *grief*, *relief*, *chief*, from the French

with a single *f*; but another *f* is added to the French *baillif, plaintif, pontif, tarif*. Why this diversity? We write the noun and verb *notice*, alike; *notice*, to *notice*: why then *practice* and to *practise*? The words ought to be alike.

Chymistry and *chemistry* are both wrong. One moment's inspection of Castle's Heptaglot Lexicon, which has stood a hundred and fifty years covered with dust, would have rectified the mistake; yet no English writer has been able to discover the origin of the word

I write *defense, offense, pretense, recompense*; for why should we write these with c, and the derivatives *defensive, offensive, pretension, recompense*, the verb, with *s*?

Ax for *axe* is found in some of our best editions of the Bible; as is *stedfast*; and *steddy* is found in respectable authors. All the words of the latter class ought to be written alike, but they must be left to future usage.

The French *chambre, nombre, desastre, disordre, diametre, tigre, chartre, arbitre, tendre, fievre, entrer, monstre, contre, rencontre*, &c. have been anglicized—*chamber, number, disaster, disorder, diameter, tiger, charter, arbiter, tender, fever, enter, monster, counter, rencounter*, &c. Why was the process left incomplete? Why were *centre, mitre, metre, lustre, sceptre* and *sepulchre*, left with the French orthography? Two or three of these words however have been anglicized by some of our best writers; and I have followed them.

Exceed, proceed, succeed are at variance with *accede, concede, intercede, precede, recede*; but I have thought this to be a minor point, and not to attempt an alteration.

Our writers are full of discrepancies in words taking the termination *ize*: some following the Latin and Greek, & others the French. But none of them are uniform in their own practice. I make it a rule to follow the Greek and Latin; as this termination has a definite use and signification, *to make*. I therefore make a distinction between this and the termination of *ise* in *surprise, enterprise, devise*, &c. with which the former has no connection. See the rule prefixed to my school dictionary.

In verbs ending with a single consonant, accented, we double the last consonant in derivatives; as *abet, abetted, abettor*; so *regret, permit, admit*, &c. But in many words in which the last consonant or syllable is not accented, the common practice is the same when there is no occasion for it, as the reason of the practice does not exist. Thus we see *levelling, leveller, quarrelling, dueller, traveller, worshipping*, &c. when the accent on the first syllable prevents any mistake in pronunciation, and renders the additional consonant unnecessary. There are from seventy to eighty verbs of this class, which I have reduced to uniformity with the whole class. There are at least two hundred verbs in which no such mistake is made. Now let any person, who has never turned his mind to the subject, write *abandonning, accustommed, alterred, alterring, atemperring, batterring, bickerring, blackenned, blazonned, burdenned, limitted, limitting*, &c. and see how his work will look. Yet these and two hundred more, are precisely in analogy with *travel, duel, libel, marvel*, &c.

The letter *k* after c, in words of Latin and Greek original, as in *public, music*, has been gradually disappearing from books for sixty or seventy years; and the addition of it is now considered as a deviation from good usage. As it has been rejected in the writings of the Parliament of England, of Congress in this country, and from almost all respectable writings, it cannot be revived; and it seems very inexpedient to attempt it. And it is the more improper, as it is never written in the derivatives, *publication, musical, mechanical*.

Johnson rejected *u* from *author, ancestor, predecessor, successor*, &c. but retained it in *honour, favour*, and some others. His reasons for this inconsistency, I do not understand. The letter *u*, however, was rejected from every word of this class, in the letters of General Washington, during our revolution. See his letters published in 2 Vol. octavo. I have followed the same rule, rendering the spelling uniform.

The discrepancies or differences in the spelling of words are still very numerous in all our books, periodicals and public journals. We see *surprise* and *surprize, enterprise* and *enterprize, merchandise* and *merchandize, inquire* and *enquire, indorse* and *endorse, insure* and *ensure, risk* and *risque, gulf* and *gulph, movable* and *moveable, libellous* and *perilous, moneys* and *monies*, &c. to the number perhaps of a thousand or two. They are found in English dictionaries, and followed by writers without rule or consistency. I formerly did the same. In my present series of books, I have attempted uniformity; and repeated revisions, have, I believe, nearly accomplished the purpose. Corrections of mistakes and misprint in the first impressions of my larger works have been made, as well as in the smaller ones; and the whole series now presents the most correct, consistent and uniform orthography that has ever been offered to the public.

When I insert two modes of spelling the same word, the common and the more analogous, the reader may judge for himself and select at pleasure. I should always prefer that which is regular or which accords with etymology, and with other similar words; but I cannot control the practice of others.

The late Rev. Daniel Barnes of the New-York high school, who had a perfect knowledge of the disorders of our orthography, with which he was daily and hourly perplexed, in the course of instructing his pupils, was permitted to read the sheets of my quarto as they came from the press. In his last visit to me, a few weeks before his unfortunate death, he used this strong language—"Your dictionary is the best book of the kind that has appeared since the flood. As soon as it is published, I will lay it on my table, and tell my pupils, *that is your canon; follow that, and no other books of the kind.*"

If I had sufficient influence, I would remove most of the difficulties which retard the learning of the language, by slight alterations of orthography, in certain classes of words, which are not numerous, and by the use of points. This might be done without obscuring a single word, so as to render it unintelligible. There are however certain anomalies in the language, which I deem to be incorrigible; such as *know, knave, knife, gnaw*. But the number is not great, and by being collected into classes, they may be learned without much difficulty. It was for this reason I classed several similar words in distinct tables, in my elementary book, forty-nine years ago. This scheme is continued, and with the help of a few general rules, in my school dictionary and Elementary Spelling Book, the labor of learning the anomalous words is very much abridged.

A perfect alphabet cannot now be introduced. Our common people wish it; but the learned are averse to any great changes; and we must be content to make the best of that which we have. Indeed, I should think it as useless as it would be inexpedient to attempt any thing like a perfect alphabet.

The inhabitants of the United States are, at a future time, to be the most numerous civilized nation on the globe. Great Britain is a limited empire, and is evidently on the wane; while her descendants are multiplying on this continent, and rising to greatness with unparalleled rapidity.—The English language in this country is to be the controlling language, and the principal instrument of propagating religion and science over the earth. The difficulty of learning it, however, is an obstacle to its extension, and even to the propagation of the christian religion. We hear of a pupil of our missionaries, who, attempting to learn English, was discouraged by its irregularity, and abandoned the attempt.

It is very desirable that our statesmen should justly estimate the importance of giving to the language a uniform, consistent and stable orthography. In my view, it is an object *not* beneath their attention. And if the editors of our public journals and newspapers would second my efforts, and with one consent adopt a uniform orthography, the work could not fail of accomplishment.

It is not probable that my scheme or any other would unite all opinions, in the outset; some concessions would be required. But for a valuable object, one would suppose that candid and patriotic men would yield their prepossessions to any reasonable plan that might effect that object.

A reprint of my quarto dictionary, consisting of three thousand copies, has been published in England. It has many subscribers on the continent, and I am informed that a German has made use of it in compiling a German dictionary. I am also informed that a member of the French institute began to translate my grammar, which is prefixed to my dictionary, but died before the work was completed

The Farmer writes that I have shown *want of taste* in introducing, in my dictionary, strictures on Lindley Murray, and that the *charges are utterly unfounded*. What charges? If the writer means the charge of plagiarism, his assertion is untrue and calumnious. Murray himself has avowed the fact in the two editions of his octavo which I have seen. Now if the Farmer will call on me, I will show him all the plagiarisms, marked, with references to the pages of my Philosophical and Practical Grammar in which I will show him the originals. Murray made no pretensions to originality; he informs us that his grammar is a *compilation*, and he names his authors. He was a neat careful compiler; and many examples and notes are his own, but not the rules or principles. He borrowed chiefly from Lowth, which was my class book in college; and all Murray's rules were as familiar to me ten years before his grammar appeared, as they ever were to him.

Since Lowth's time many discoveries in language have been made; and Murray's grammar is, in several points, defective; in others, erroneous.

Since the Farmer has introduced the subject, I must be excused for introducing here the following extract from a letter which I received some years ago from an intelligent friend of mine, belonging to the society of Quakers:

"It has happened to me this morning that I took up thy Philosophical and Practical Grammar, and examined it with an increased degree of interest and pleasure. How much I found to admire, and how much to increase my sentiments of obligation to the author, I shall omit to describe. I am greatly thy debtor, my worthy friend. This book alone ought to command the gratitude of thy country, and that country should pride itself on such a work and such an author. Here I paused—for the author has not been rewarded as he ought. I turned to Murray and the best of those predecessors whose labors had marked his way; and again I paused. In spite of religion, whose precepts I revere, my spirit became indignant. Thou benefactor of mankind—of the age—thou hast done great things for America, and her fathers and sons have turned from thee! Had I the wealth I once enjoyed, 'narrow circumstances'' should not circumscribe thy sphere of usefulness. There is a cunning as well as a tide in the affairs of men, and cunning runs with the current. The work that divides the stream must feel all its force. Murray gave his copy to the booksellers, and the booksellers have given Murray a great name. Posterity will do thee justice, and the time is coming when all previous grammars will be wiped away, as the cobwebs of literature, to make room for the science of grammar in Webster."

The experience of a long life has enabled me to estimate the value of time, and to distinguish between what is *useful* and *useless* in education. I suppose that one fifth or one fourth part of my time has been wasted, either in learning what is not true, or that which has been of no use to me. Confiding in books, without examining the foundation of the principles the inculcate, I imbibed many opinions which I afterwards found not to be true; and the trouble of *unlearning* what is false, has far exceeded the labor of learning it. This has been the fact in philology.

On other subjects I have often learned a *little*, which has done me no good, because I did not learn *more*; or I have studied that which I have not wanted, which has been soon forgotten, and which, had I retained it, would have been wholly useless. In attempting to discipline my mind in that which I was never to use, I neglected to discipline it in that which I have wanted every day of my life. I did not indeed attempt to learn sciences before I had learned to spell, to read and to write; for if I had, I should have forgotten them before I was old enough to apply them to any practical purpose. But I read books without system, and embraced theories which misled me, or diverted my mind from a due attention to facts and common sense, the basis of practical knowledge. Above all things, I mistook my duty and made that the *primary* object which ought to be *secondary*. I neglected to

imitate the example of Christ and his apostles, in attempting to be *great* rather than *good*. I devoted more time and attention to human literature, than to the acquisition of that knowledge which ought to be the first and principal business of life—a knowledge of my Maker's will, and of the means of benefiting myself and my fellow men, by correcting vices, erroneous opinions, and evil habits, and thus exalting the human character to the dignity of christians. N WEBSTER.

New-Haven, Feb. 9, 1832.

THE MULBERRY TREE, SILK WORMS, &c.

Translated from the French for the GENESEE FARMER, from a work entitled *The Practical Course of Agriculture.*

Although most caterpillars are very troublesome and destructive, one of the species is of inestimable value; it is the silk worm: the matter produced by this insect, in the hands of industrious workmen, furnishes both for use and luxury the finest and most beautiful stuffs; and which has become one of the most important branches of commerce. Therefore every one who has leaves of the white mulberry in his possession, and does not profit by them, attends not to his own interest, because he might derive from them great profit, without any expense or the consumption of much time.

THE WHITE MULBERRY.

The white mulberry originally from India, produces the leaves most proper for nourishing the bombix in order to obtain fine silk: this tree is generally robust, grows quickly, multiplies easily and acclimates itself in every country: in hot countries its height and proportions are equal to those of the oak. The various properties of its bark and its fruit are sufficient to assign it a very distinguished rank in the vegetable kingdom; but that which makes it of inestimable value, is that precious material which it furnishes the fair sex, both for dress and ornament: Incomparable material! which presents to the eye a lustre not less resplendent and to the touch a surface not less soft and polished than the charms which it enrobes.

Nevertheless the mulberry has not been created expressly for the luxury of man: its fruit and its leaves belong equally to all insects. The mulberry was of no avail to human industry, before the discovery of the precious matter of which we are about to speak. The quality of silk depends neither upon the worm which spins it, or the seed from which it springs. We see that the seed of the middle countries of Europe produce fine silk; while in the country from which they originated the silks they yield are coarse and heavy. The quality of the silk depends principally on that of the leaves with which the insect is fed. The mulberry, speaking figuratively, is only a mine which the worm works; and this mine is in itself neither more or less proper for furnishing the fine matter than according to the soil which it occupies and the climate in which it is placed.

What proves that nature has not destined the mulberry to the sole use that we make of it, is that in order to obtain a fine silk from this tree, it must be taken from the soil and climate which it likes best and transported to those where its vegetation is less vigorous; its trunk less thick and high; its leaves not so coarse and large; the tree altogether less majestic; and by a contrariety still more singular, the worm which it should feed in these strange countries, would infallibly perish, were it not supplied by an artificial heat equal to that of the climate where it breeds spontaneously.

Throughout a great part of Asia, in the southernmost provinces of China, and above all in Bengal, the silk worm requires no care; it lives on the trees where they breed, grow, and pass through all their metamorphoses. The inhabitants of these countries have merely the trouble of gathering the cocoons: missing sufficient to renew the seed.

But on examining these silks, it is remarked that those of China have no other merit than their dazzling whiteness, which is owing, perhaps, to a manipulation, or to some ingredients which are to us unknown. As to evenness, fineness and lightness, these silks, like those of the rest of Asia, and chiefly those of Bengal, are so inferior to the silks of the Levant, Spain, France, Piedmont Palatinate, &c. that this inferiority can be attributed only to the nature of their soil and climate, although otherwise they appear so favorable to the production of the worm and the growth of the tree which nourishes it. Therefore it is natural that without regarding the soil which the white mulberry likes best, we assign it that best suited to produce the rich material which we wish to obtain from it. The fine quality of the silk therefore depends on the choice of the soil and climate.

A rich and fertile soil gives to the mulberry a quick and vigorous growth, and a leaf which by being too substantial produces but a coarse, heavy and inferior silk.

Wet and marshy lands, those which are situated in valleys or near rivers and streams, give to plants such an abundance of sap that they become in a short time very fine trees; but the leaf being too watery enervates the worms, occasions them many diseases, retards the *noontee*, (that is, the period when the worms spin their cocoons,) of those who do not perish, and produces only a silk flimsy, and of little value.

The leaves of those mulberry trees which grow in elevated, dry, sandy or gravelly soils, are the most valuable; the crop is not so abundant, but the quality fully makes up for the want of quantity. It has been demonstrated by experience from exact investigations on this subject, that the worse a land is reputed to be, so much the finer, lighter and stronger is the silk which it produces, three qualities which constitute the goodness of this material. The quality of the silk, depending only on the leaf which feeds the insect, it should be fine, light, and not substantial; therefore, the poorer and less fertile the soil, so much more does it possess the requisite qualities. No culture in this respect, even, offers the same advantages as the mulberry.

This tree takes root in ground which we suppose to have the least productive virtue; without being impeded by any obstacle, it spreads its roots indifferently both near the surface and deep under the ground, when it does not obtain the majestic height of the oak, it contents itself to vegetate as an humble shrub. The white mulberry can be trained to any shape which fancy can invent: as a copse, an espalier, a standard tree, or a bush, its leaves will always possess the same property: it is true that in a barren soil they produce but very few, but the less there are of them, so much the more precious they are from the value they add to the material which results from their use; thus gaining in quality what is lost in quantity: we owe it, every other consideration apart, to prefer a bad soil, for in that only it produces the finest silk.

It is to be noted that all land proper for the cultivation of wheat, is improper for the mulberry, relatively to the qualities contained in its leaf.—On the contrary, this tree acquires all the necessary qualities from land favorable to the growth of the vine or rye.

An essential rule to be observed in planting these trees, is, to dispose them in such a manner that when they have attained their full growth their branches may never touch one another; for then the mulberries would injure one another, either in being too crowded or in intercepting the air which should circulate freely around them.—But a rich soil giving them height, and considerable development, they should be placed at a proportionate distance.

There exists a remarkable analogy between the vine and the mulberry; this tree in order to produce fine silk, as also the vine to produce good wine, rejects every sort of dung. The mulberry grows equally as well on hills, with a southern or eastern aspect: but it has moreover an advantage over the vine, in being able to flourish on the plain and in better resisting the north winds.—From these considerations its culture should be preferred above every other on a flat, dry soil, where it is impossible, or very expensive, to procure barn yard manure.

An almost general prejudice against the white mulberry destined for the nourishment of the silk worm, is, that those which are grafted are much better than the wild, that is to say, those which spring simply from seed, shoots or suckers. The only advantage of grafted mulberries, is, that they furnish a larger and fuller leaf; but it is certain that the leaf of the seedling, when well cultivated in a proper soil, produces much better silk, in far greater quantity, and that the worm which is fed on it thrives better.

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From the Bucks County Intelligencer.

PURPLE GRAKLE—COMMON CROW-BLACKBIRD.—*Quiscolus versicolor.*

A pair of these birds having built their nest on a large buttonwood tree in front of our door, were observed to visit the corn-fields, just after the tender blades had peeped above the ground, in quest of food for their hungry and noisy brood. Supposing they were engaged in pulling up the young corn, I hastened to the scene of havoc, with a loaded gun, for the purpose of checking their plundering career; but not willing to condemn them unheard, I for a time from a covert watched their motions—when to my surprise they were busy picking up grubs, (which infested our corn field,) and had not disturbed a single hill of corn. I retraced my steps with a full conviction of the sound policy of protecting them and the "little trooping birds," as but comparatively few species of them damage us as much as they benefit us.

My attention was recalled to this subject, at the present time, by perusing John A. Audubon's Ornithological Biography, or an account of the habits of the Birds of the U. States of America. It is a very interesting work, and ought to be read by every lover of the beauties of the American feathered songsters. The truth of the following vivid scene, must be fresh to the recollection of every ploughman.

"No sooner," says he, "has the cotton or corn planter begun to turn his land into brown furrows, than the Crow-Blackbirds are seen sailing down from the skirts of the woods, alighting in the fields, and following his track along the ridges of newly turned earth, with an elegant and elevated step, which shows them to be as fearless and free as the air through which they wing their way. The genial rays of the sun shine on their silky plumage, and offer to the ploughman's eye such rich and varying tints, that no painter, however gifted, could ever imitate them. The coppery bronze; which in one light shows its rich gloss, is by the least motion of the bird, changed in a moment to brilliant and deep azure, and again, in the next light, become refulgent sapphire or emerald green.

The bird stops, spreads its tail, lowers its wings, and with swelled throat and open bill, sounds a call to those which may chance to be passing near. The stately step is resumed. Its keen eye, busily engaged on either side, is immediately attracted by a grub hastening to hide itself from the sudden exposure made by the plough. In vain does it hurry, for the Grakle has seen and marked him for his own, and it is snatched up and swallowed in a moment.

Thus does the Grakle follow the husbandman as he turns one furrow after another, destroying a far worse enemy to the corn than itself; for every worm which it devours would else shortly cut the slender blade, and thereby destroy the plant, when it would perhaps be too late to renew it by fresh seed. Every reflecting farmer knows this well, and refrains from disturbing the Grakle at this season. Were he as merciful at another time, it would prove his grateful recollection of the services thus rendered him. But man is too often forgetful of the benefit which he has received; he permits his, too commonly, weak and selfish feeling to prevail over his reason; and no sooner does the corn become fit for his own use, than he vows and executes vengeance upon all intruders."

Audubon remarks that they are as fond of corn as the lords of the soil are; and that it is but the tythe of their services, which was so appointed, and is the will of the beneficent Creator. D. L.

Warminster, 2d mo. 8, 1832.

THE HORSE AND VIPER.

By a report read before the Royal Institute of France in 1830, it appears that the great viper called *Fer de lance* is one of the most dreadful scourges of the West Indies, but is found only in Martinique, St. Lucia and another small island. The viper is so savage that the moment it sees any person, it immediately erects itself and springs upon him. In raising itself it rests upon four equal circles, formed by the lower part of the body; when it springs these circles are suddenly dissolved. After the spring if it should miss its object, it may be attacked with advantage, but this requires considerable courage; for as soon as it erects itself again, the assailant runs the greater risk of being bitten. Often, too, it is so bold, as to follow its enemy by leaps and bounds instead of fleeing from him; and it does not cease the pursuit till its revenge is glutted. In its erect position it is so much the more formidable, because it is as high as a man, and can even bite a man on horseback. Mr. Morreau de Joanes was once riding through a wood, when his horse reared; and when the rider looked around to discover the cause of the animal's terror, he perceived a *Fer de lance* viper standing quite erect in a bush of bamboo; and heard it hiss several times. He would have fired at it with his pistol; but the affrighted horse drew back so ungovernably, that he was obliged to look about for somebody to hold him. He now espied at some distance a negro upon the ground wallowing in his blood, and cutting with a blunt knife, the flesh from the wound occasioned by the bite of the same viper. When the author acquainted him with his intention of killing the serpent, he earnestly opposed it, as he wished to take it alive and make use of it for his cure, according to the superstitious notions of the negroes.

He soon rose, cut some *lianes*, made a snare with them, and then concealed himself behind a bush, near the viper, he attracted his attention by a low whistling noise, and suddenly throwing a noose over the animal, drew it tight and secured his enemy. Mr. Morreau saw this negro twelve months afterwards, but he had not perfectly recovered the use of his limbs bitten by the viper. The negroes persecute these vipers with the greatest acrimony. When they have killed one, they cut off his head, and bury it deep in the earth, that no mischief may be done with their fangs, which are dangerous after the death of the animal. Men and beasts shun this formidable reptile; the birds manifest the same antipathy for that, as they do for owls in Europe, and a small one of the *loxia* kind, even gives warning by its cry that a viper is at hand.

Scientific Hints.—Ice is the natural state of water, it is only by the addition of caloric (heat,) that it becomes fluid.—The reason why water in freezing bursts the closed vessel in which it is contained, or rises in the form of a bulb in an open one, is because ice is more porus than water, and therefore occupies more room.—A single cubic inch of water, while freezing, expands with a force equal to thirteen tons. The porus nature of ice accounts for its swimming on the surface of water. Were it not for this beautiful exception to the common law of nature, by which all bodies contract on the application of cold, successive lavers of ice would be formed, and sink to the bottom, till the whole fluid mass would become one solid body of ice, by which all evaporation would be prevented, and vegetables deprived of their nourishment would wither and decay; animals would perish from thirst and cold, and this single change in the laws of nature would be sufficient to destroy all living substances.

Ice at the Bottom of Streams.—It is asked by a correspondent of the Philadelphia American Advertiser, "Does ice floating in rivers or in the sea disappear by actual dissolving into water, or does it in any case disappear by sinking?"

Although we are decidedly of the opinion, that ice never sinks of itself, being rendered, specifically lighter than water by the process of freezing, which increases the bulk of water, and therefore entirely agree in opinion with the querist, yet the very question reminded us of a curious fact we heard some weeks ago, in relation to the formation of ice in some of the western streams of the State of New-York. In and near Steuben County, as was stated on very respectable authority, many of the streams begin to freeze at the bottom. This happens more particularly where the current is quick; and, owing to this fact, the fording of them is often attended with inconvenience and even danger. This, which is both contrary to common experience, and difficult to account for, may perhaps have been observed in other places, and may be of easy solution to the scientific. It strikes us, however, as very singular.—*N. Y. Dai. Adv.*

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